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SUBJECT: U.S. AND IRAQ CONDUCT INAUGURAL MEETING OF
SECURITY AGREEMENT JMOCC

Classified By: Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[¶1.](#) (C) Summary. On January 8, 2009, the United States and the Republic of Iraq conducted the first meeting of the Joint Military Operations Coordinating Committee (JMOCC) established under the new U.S.-Iraq Security Agreement (SA). The Iraqi delegates proved enthusiastic but had failed to resolve internal organizational issues beforehand. Skillful meeting management by U.S. co-chair LTG Lloyd Austin, combined with well-organized presentations by the U.S. Joint Sub-Committee (JSC) co-chairs and Secretariat, produced the desired results: Iraqi co-chair MinDef Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji agreed to the basic structural and procedural ideas that the U.S. representatives put forward, to have the JSCs meet within ten days, and to convene the JMOCC again on January 19. End Summary.

[¶2.](#) (U) The inaugural meeting of the Joint Military Operations Coordinating Committee (JMOCC) convened at the Iraqi Ministry of Defense (MOD) on January 8, 2009, at 1:30 PM. The meeting was co-chaired by Lieutenant General (LTG) Lloyd Austin, acting Commanding General of MNF-I, and Iraqi Minister of Defense Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji, assisted by U.S. SA Secretariat Director Major General (MG) Timothy McHale, U.S. Embassy representative Ambassador Jackson McDonald, Iraqi Joint Forces Chief of Staff General Babakir Zibari, and Iraqi SA Secretariat Director MG Mohammed Askiri.

[¶3.](#) (U) Held in a large hall to accommodate the 70-odd participants, the meeting was attended by key leaders and deputies representing the sub-committees slated to form under the JMOCC as well as the staffs of the respective secretariats.

[¶4.](#) (C) Following brief opening remarks, MinDef Abd al-Qadir commenced an enumeration of proposed JSCs, discussing their functions at length while attempting to identify the Iraqi co-chairs for each. Though there was little controversy concerning the Iraqi representation on the two JSCs already in existence (IZ Security (IZS) and Provincial Security Assessment (PSA)), and only limited discussion of the Vehicles, Vessels, and Aircraft Movement (VVAM) JSC, there was protracted and sometimes heated debate by the Iraqi delegation regarding leadership of the Military Operations JSC. As the conversation continued, it ranged broadly, including both basing transition and the disposition of Iraqi forces. At one point, Qadir proposed the formation of several working groups under the Military Operations JSC.

[¶5.](#) (C) LTG Austin, noting that the Government of Iraq would need more time to decide on the composition of its sub-committee delegations, reminded the representatives that the JMOCC is a policy-oriented body and that many of the issues raised would more properly be addressed in the appropriate JSCs. Basing issues, for example, could be addressed in the Facilities and Areas Agreed Upon (FAAU) JSC (note: which will form under the Joint Committee, not the JMOCC), while military operations should be handled by the Military Operations JSC, rather than the JMOCC.

[¶6.](#) (C) MG McHale introduced the U.S. co-chair for each of the proposed JSCs. First was MG Guy Swan, the co-chair for the already functioning IZS JSC, who provided a description

of the work already completed in collaboration with its Iraqi co-chair, General Faruq al-Aaraji, Director of the Prime Minister's military staff, the Office of the Commander in Chief (OCINC). MG Swan detailed the progress made in QChief (OCINC). MG Swan detailed the progress made in drafting an IZ transition plan, the training of Iraqi soldiers to man entry control points, and preparations for the sustainment of capabilities currently provided through U.S.-funded contracts. He stated that this is the type of report that he could provide at subsequent JMOCC meetings. In response to questions from MinDef Abd al-Qadir, MG Swan explained that the IZS JSC is already addressing badging, entry/exit control, specialized equipment, and the protection of sensitive areas. Reinforcing the message that the JSCs are the preferred venue to handle specific operational issues, LTG Austin stated that we have a common vision of how the JSCs will work and that we must allow them to do so, reporting progress periodically to the JMOCC. Minister Qadir responded that this is exactly what is needed from the other JSCs.

17. (C) MG McHale next introduced MG Michael Ferriter, who briefed the representatives on plans for the yet-to-form Military Operations, Training, and Logistic Support (MOTLS) JSC. He explained the future JSC's role in coordinating operations, training, and logistic support, noting that it would cover areas as diverse as fire support, medical support, and force generation. He was followed by BG Kurt Stein, the U.S. co-chair for the Vehicles, Vessels, and Aircraft Movement (VVAM) JSC. BG Stein described the future JSC's responsibilities for all aspects of military movement, including military convoys, driver licensing, vehicle registration, and cargo management. When asked by MinDef Abd al-Qadir about vessel and aircraft movements, BG Stein

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reassured him that the VVAM JCS would handle them also.

18. (C) The last of the briefers was RDML David Buss, the U.S. co-chair of the Provincial Security Responsibility (PSR) JSC. Noting that the JSC would be a follow-on to its previous incarnation as the Joint Committee for the Transfer of Security Responsibility (JCTSR), he cited the work already completed with Iraqi co-chair Hamza Sharif Hasan on the return of thirteen provinces to Iraqi control prior to December 31, 2008. Looking forward, the JSC would assess and make recommendations regarding the remaining five provinces and when they would reach a level of security self-reliance similar to the other thirteen provinces. He said that the JSC should continue to assess all the factors that affect security in all eighteen provinces, since conditions will not remain constant. Concurrently, the JSC will work to build and develop the Iraqi assessment capacity.

19. (C) The MinDef proposed a fifth JSC under the JMOCC for frequency management (FM), while acknowledging that the Iraqi Ministry of Communications (MOC) is already handling this issue. He suggested that the Iraqi Military Communications Directorate and MNF-I's CJ-6 form the core of a JSC, which could include Ministry of the Interior (MOI) personnel as well, to provide for Iraqi control of FM under the JMOCC. Hamza added that placing FM under the JMOCC was consistent with the SA. In response, MG McHale noted that the FM JSC is currently aligned with the JC, but that the SA places it under the JMOCC, and that the two sides would have to work out where the JSC will be during the coming weeks. LTG Austin concluded discussion of the issue, stating that it will be taken under review and that MNF-I will provide the U.S. position to the MinDef.

110. (C) Following some additional but inconclusive discussion of JSC delegation composition by the Iraqi representatives, the JMOCC turned to the subject of the next date to convene. MG McHale proposed January 22 as a possible date, allowing sufficient time for the JSCs to meet and identify unresolved issues to report to the JMOCC. Expressing concern that some of the representatives would have to depart Baghdad before January 22 in order to prepare for the upcoming provincial elections, the Iraqi delegation offered a counter proposal of the nineteenth or twentieth.

LTG Austin stated that those dates are possible but that the JSCs would have to meet before, and that there would have to be a set of agreed minutes for every meeting of the JMOCC. Abd al-Qadir responded that while this was all very clear to him, he would have to find a way to convey these complex structures and procedures to the Council of Ministers in a way that they could readily capture. LTG Austin brought the meeting to a close reminding the JMOCC that MNF-I needs a response from MOD on the co-chairs for the Iraqi JSCs and the proposed date for the next meeting, which the U.S. would host.

¶11. (C) Comment. While the MinDef and the Iraqi participants were less than fully prepared for the meeting, LTG Austin's steady and patient management of the proceedings brought the dialogue back on track and produced most of the outcomes sought. Abd al-Qadir agreed to the basic structure and concept of the JMOCC, proposed procedures, and a subsequent meeting. He also agreed that the JSCs should convene before the next meeting of the JMOCC, though it was clear that there remains some details for the GOI to work out. The Iraqi representatives appeared eager to participate in the SA implementation process. Competition over leadership positions of some of the JSCs was intense, so much so that the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, LTG Hashim, had an acrimonious exchange with the Ground Forces Commander, LTG Ali, over the co-chairmanship of the Military Operations JSC, an issue apparently resolved by the MinDef's designation of GEN Babakir to fill the position. End Comment.

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